



Irony of India's un-nationalism

By BS Murthy

That 9/11 in 2001, when some of the 44 passengers aboard the Al Qaeda-hijacked United Airlines Flight 93 came to know about the carnage of the World Trade Center through their cell-phones, realizing that their lives would soon end in the debris of some notable building, maybe the White House itself, they had conveyed to the callers their intent to unnerve the hijackers to avert further damage to their nation, only to perish in the process shortly thereafter.

But three years earlier, when the Indian Airlines Flight 814 was hijacked by Islamic militants to Kandahar in 12/1999, the families of its 178 passengers managed to build the public opinion for their trade off with terrorists jailed in Indian prisons, which eventually pushed the government in that direction. Whatever might have been the on-board mood of the passengers-in-captivity, the symphony of joy played out at their family reunions carried no jarring note of it having come at the cost of their nation's well-being!

This piece though is not about the America's exemplary sense of nationalism, but is all about the Indian non-nationalism.

India's left-oriented historians and the Nehru-mould intellectuals would rather have it that never was India a nation before the British colonized it into one, albeit before its partition. Nothing is farther from the truth for from Kashmir to KanyaKumari and from Kandahar to Comilla, it had been the Hindu tradition to begin a prayer or ritual with the '*jambu dweepa, bharata varshe bharata khande*' *sankalpa* that further contains the applicable sub-geographical location, the on-going yuga, the current year etc. Wonder how this vital fact of *Arya Varta* is lost on all those who scoff at the Hindu nationalism as the said *sankalpa* reverberates in every nook and corner of our India that is Bharat every day, even these days.

The idea of India, devoid of a nationalist urge, even after it became a free nation, after two millennia of subjugation, was ironically shaped by the very leadership that was instrumental in helping it gain freedom! Given this abnormality, the question that naturally arises is why and how so, but before answering the same, it is relevant to observe the fascinating proposition of Ms. Maryam Jameelah that "If the Mughal monarchs had assumed their responsibilities as Muslim rulers and organized intensive *tabliq* or missionary work, the majority of Indians would have embraced Islam and hence the necessity for partition and all the disasters that followed in its wake, never would have arisen." (*Islam and Orientalism*, Adam Publishers, New Delhi). Indeed, it is ironical that Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah's homeland for the Indian Musalmans, was later vivisected by the Bengali Muslims to cater to their cultural separateness though within the Islamic fold.

When the entire case for India's partition was built by the Muslims, solely upon the incompatibility of their Islamic faith with the Hindu beliefs, logically speaking, post-partition, there was no case for any Muslim to remain in the parent country. Yet, as if to showcase Hindu pluralistic ethos or to win the world acclaim, and or both, our leaders of that era were not averse to letting the willing Musalmans to stay put in India. Well, it can be argued that all Muslims were not enamored of a separate homeland, but yet, after the partition of the land on religious fault-lines, they had lost the rights of tenancy, derived from the virtue of ancestry, legally as well as morally that is.

Whatever, they were allowed to stay back in numbers to form a substantial Muslim minority amidst India's Hindu majority, and sadly for both, instead of ironing the incompatibilities of their alien faith with the Hindu beliefs, the *raison d'être* of the partition, for the harmonization of the country's communal amity, Nehru strived to nurture the Islamic sense of separateness among India's formidable minority. One often wonders that but for Dr. BR Ambedkar, whether Gandhi, Nehru et al, well-educated all, had an idea of what Islam is all about – its supremacist and separatist ethos, its animosity to the people of other faiths, its insatiable urge to make it a Muslim world by means of procreation, conversion and coercion, its concept of Muslim Brotherhood that's at odds with nationalistic impulses, and such fissiparous doctrines. Moreover, their refusal to amalgamate with the non-Islamic societies they happen to live is akin to their being merely tenants on lease devoid of any stake in or an emotional attachment with it. Given their Islamic naivety on constant exhibition, needless to say, the Hindu intellectuals of our generation fare no better in a critical appraisal of the world's fastest growing religion with an avowed intent to imperil every other faith (interested may access my free ebook, *Puppets of Faith: Theory of Communal Strife- A critical appraisal of Islamic faith, Indian polity 'n more* through Google).

Since nationalism is anathema to Islam, so as to spare the Muslims from such an irreligious suffering, it was only proper for the Indian State to dent the Hindu nationalistic ethos, exemplified by their '*jambu dweepa, bharata varshe bharata khande*' *sankalpa*, so might have thought Nehru, the alter ego of Gandhi, who was silly enough to aver that Hindus should smilingly face death if Muslims were to kill them, and acted besides. But if he had a long-term vision, he would have clearly envisaged the possibility of Hindu-Muslim amity brought about by shared national ethos for Hindu nationalism was non-intrusive, and at that point of time the Muslims would have been more amenable to that idea than ever before or ever after. While his mentor dented the resurgent national impulses being cultivated by Subhas Bose in the bud, Nehru made India miss the nationalist bus, probably forever. What's worse, when his daughter, Indira, saw the electoral benefits accruing to her dynasty from the

sectarian strategy, she fine-tuned it to form Muslim Vote-Banks all across the country, which, in time, became the edifices of the secular 'idea of India'.

The cumulative effect of this peculiar aversion to nationalism (name another nation on earth, whose citizens are devoid of nationalist impulses) in time became the cause of India's undoing in every conceivable way. While the nationalistic void was insensibly filled by caste and communal bondage to India's democratic detriment, the lack of nationalist ethos fomented the nation-destructing art of self-aggrandizement, leaving the moral fabric of our society in tatters. The widespread corruption that plagues our country exemplifies the near total absence of nationalistic feeling in our society for as graft hurts a country, it's an anti-national activity. Nothing illustrates the baneful affects of India's non-nationalistic character than the congenital lethargy in its government offices and the dismal failure of its public sector enterprises. The grand success of Bharat Atomic Research Centre and Indian Space Research Organization and the dismal failure of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited would underscore the beneficial outcomes even in the public sector, when driven by nationalist commitment.